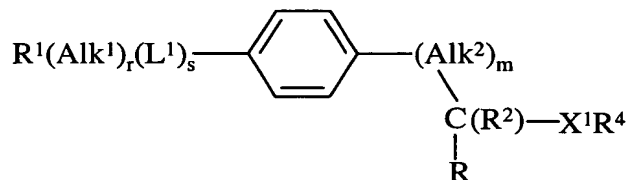


This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) A compound of formula (1a):



wherein:

R is a carboxylic acid;

~~R<sup>1</sup> is an optionally substituted~~ a pyridyl group substituted by one or two halogen atoms;

~~-(Alk<sup>1</sup>)<sub>r</sub>(L<sup>1</sup>)<sub>s</sub>- is a -CH<sub>2</sub>O- or -CON(R<sup>5</sup>)- group;~~

~~Alk<sup>1</sup> is an optionally substituted C<sub>1-6</sub> aliphatic chain or an optionally substituted chain selected from L<sup>2</sup>CH<sub>2</sub>-, CH<sub>2</sub>L<sup>2</sup>CH<sub>2</sub>-, L<sup>2</sup>(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>-, CH<sub>2</sub>L<sup>2</sup>(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>-, (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>L<sup>2</sup>CH<sub>2</sub>-, L<sup>2</sup>(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>3</sub>-, and (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>L<sup>2</sup>(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>-, where L<sup>2</sup> is selected from the group consisting of O-, S-, C(O)-, C(O)O-, C(S)-, S(O)-, S(O)<sub>2</sub>-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)-, CON(R<sup>5</sup>)-, OC(O)N(R<sup>5</sup>)-, CSN(R<sup>5</sup>)-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)CO-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)C(O)O-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)CS-, S(O)N(R<sup>5</sup>)-, S(O)<sub>2</sub>N(R<sup>5</sup>)-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)S(O)-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)S(O)<sub>2</sub>-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)CON(R<sup>5</sup>)-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)CSN(R<sup>5</sup>)-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)SON(R<sup>5</sup>)-, and N(R<sup>5</sup>)SO<sub>2</sub>N(R<sup>5</sup>)-;~~

R<sup>5</sup> is a hydrogen atom or a straight or branched alkyl group;

~~L<sup>1</sup> is O-, S-, C(O)-, C(O)O-, C(S)-, S(O)-, S(O)<sub>2</sub>-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)-, CON(R<sup>5</sup>)-, OC(O)N(R<sup>5</sup>)-, CSN(R<sup>5</sup>)-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)CO-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)C(O)O-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)CS-, S(O)N(R<sup>5</sup>)-, S(O)<sub>2</sub>N(R<sup>5</sup>)-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)S(O)-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)S(O)<sub>2</sub>-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)CON(R<sup>5</sup>)-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)CSN(R<sup>5</sup>)-, N(R<sup>5</sup>)SON(R<sup>5</sup>)-, or N(R<sup>5</sup>)SO<sub>2</sub>N(R<sup>5</sup>)-;~~

~~r and s, which may be the same or different, is each zero or an integer 1;~~

Alk<sup>2</sup> is a straight or branched alkylene chain;

m is zero or an integer 1;

R<sup>2</sup> is a hydrogen atom or a methyl group;

X<sup>1</sup> is a group selected from -N(R<sup>3</sup>)CO-, (where R<sup>3</sup> is a hydrogen atom or a straight or branched alkyl group); -N(R<sup>3</sup>)SO<sub>2</sub>-, -N(R<sup>3</sup>)C(O)O- or -N(R<sup>3</sup>)CON(R<sup>3a</sup>)- (where R<sup>3a</sup> is a hydrogen atom or a straight or branched alkyl group);

R<sup>4</sup> is ~~an optionally substituted C<sub>1-6</sub>aliphatic, C<sub>3-10</sub>cycloalkyl, C<sub>3-10</sub>cycloalkenyl, C<sub>7-10</sub>bicycloalkyl, C<sub>7-10</sub>tricycloalkyl, C<sub>7-10</sub>bicycloalkenyl, or C<sub>7-10</sub>tricycloalkenyl group~~ a straight or branched C<sub>1-6</sub> alkyl group;

~~and the salts, solvates, hydrates or N-oxides thereof~~ or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

2-5. (canceled)

6. (original) A compound according to Claim 5 wherein -(Alk<sup>1</sup>)<sub>r</sub>(L<sup>1</sup>)<sub>s</sub>- is a -CONH- group.

7. (original) A compound according to Claim 1 wherein Alk<sup>2</sup> is -CH<sub>2</sub>-, m is an integer 1, and R<sup>2</sup> is a hydrogen atom.

8. (original) A compound according to Claim 1 wherein X<sup>1</sup> is a -NHCO-, -NHSO<sub>2</sub>-, -NHC(O)O- or -NHCONH- group.

9. (original) A compound according to Claim 8 wherein X<sup>1</sup> is a -NHCO- group.

10. (canceled)

11. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~Claim 10~~ Claim 1 wherein R<sup>4</sup> is an ~~optionally substituted~~ a straight or branched C<sub>1-4</sub>alkyl, ~~cyclopropyl, cyclobutyl, cyclopentyl~~ or adamantyl group.

12. (currently amended) A compound which is:

*N*-Isopropaloyl-*N*-(3,5-dichloroisonicotinoyl)-*L*-4-aminophenylalanine;

*N*-Cyclopropaloyl-*N*-(3,5-dichloroisonicotinoyl)-*L*-4-aminophenylalanine;

*N*-Acetyl-*N'*-(3,5-dichloroisonicotinoyl)-*L*-4-aminophenylalanine;

and the salts, solvates, hydrates or N-oxides thereof or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

13. (original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to Claim 1 together with one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers, excipients or diluents.

14-19. (canceled)

20. (new) A compound according to Claim 1 wherein R<sup>1</sup> is a pyridyl group substituted by one or two chlorine atoms.